

Approved as amended by the Board of Selectmen

**MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 3, 2003**

ATTENDANCE: First Selectman Robert Harrel; Evonne Klein; Joseph Warren;
Dr. Joseph Miceli; Barbara Thorne

STAFF: John Crary, Town Administrator

OTHERS: Flora Smith; Linda Santarella

First Selectman Harrel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING

NEW BUSINESS

**REPORT BY MARY ANNE OBUCHOWSKI, TOWN ASSESSOR, ON THE STATUS OF
THE REVALUATION PROJECT**

Ms. Obuchowski, Town Assessor, reported that the revaluation was basically done. She stated that there were no final figures yet, however she should have them very soon, possibly next week. She noted that the public access computers will be running next week in the Library, as well as public access computers in Town Hall. She stated that there will be no field cards available until the end of January and homeowner field cards would be free and would be available at Town Hall.

Ms. Obuchowski then distributed a draft letter, dated November 7th, to be sent to all Darien property owners and a copy of the schedule for the informal hearings. She stated that there will be two stages: first, the appraisers for the revaluation company, Cole-Layer-Trumble, will meet with individual property owners to answer questions and hear objections. Then informal hearings with CLT's staff will begin on November 12th and continue until December 3rd. She noted that since November 11th was the Veterans Day holiday and the Town Hall was closed, she might extend the time for people to call for appointments until November 24th.

Ms. Obuchowski continued that the last revaluation was done four years ago and that this current revaluation was not a physical revaluation — the next revaluation in four years will also be statistical. Mr. Warren commented that it was important that the people understand that the revaluation was forced upon the Town to comply with Section 12-55 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Mr. Warren suggested that the next revaluation should be performed by a company other than Cole-Layer-Trumble not as a reflection of the company, but to have a new company start from scratch.

Ms. Flora Smith stated that it would be worthwhile if the process of the revaluation could be explained to property owners as they did not understand the process. First Selectman Harrel stated that there were a series of three press releases and it was placed in the newspaper. Ms. Obuchowski stated that information was available on the website. Ms. Thorne agreed that there was information out there.

MEET WITH SANDY MCDONALD, CHAIRMAN OF THE ADVISORY COMMISSION ON COASTAL WATERS, REGARDING AN UPDATE ON LONG ISLAND DISPOSAL SITES

Mr. McDonald stated that he would update the Board on the disposal site project with the EPA. He reported that Long Island Sound currently has four dredged material disposal sites and they will be closed down for the winter. He continued that, by law, the EPA has to re-designate these sites. He reported that to do that, they have to make an Environmental Impact Statement. Mr. McDonald reported that the Environment Impact Statement was started in 1999 and he then began working with the EPA to develop it. He noted that he also serves on the Citizens Advisory Council of the EPA/LIS Study. Mr. McDonald stated that the Town of Darien is involved because boating is one of the most important resources of the Town and it relies on periodic dredging to maintain the safety and viability of recreational and commercial boating activities.

Mr. McDonald then distributed a draft of the Environmental Impact Statement recommendations for the designation of dredged material disposal sites in Central and Western Long Island Sound, Connecticut and New York that was proposed by the EPA. Mr. McDonald stated that he received the EIS on September 12th. He stated that the EIS reports that four alternatives dredged material sites were analyzed, two that were currently active and two presently inactive. The four sites analyzed were Western Long Island Sound, Bridgeport, Milford, and Central Long Island and also a No Action alternative. He also distributed a draft letter to be sent to the EPA from First Selectman Harrel strongly supporting the recertification of the Western LIS disposal site.

Mr. McDonald reported that in the EIS the EPA recommends shifting the location of the WLIS site and reconfiguring the CLIS site. He stated that to re-designate the CLIS site was good news for boaters to keep the harbor viable and safe. Mr. McDonald stated that there were many good reasons to support the EPA's recommendations and there would be no environmental impact to the shores. He reported that public comments on the draft EIS to the EPA were due on November 13th and then there will be a public hearing held on November 17th.

Ms. Thorne asked if the Advisory Commission supported the statement. She also questioned how the process worked if the statement was made on behalf of the Town and who approved the Town's position. Mr. Crary stated that the Commission was the advisory commission to the Board. First Selectman Harrel stated that in his opinion, there was no position change and that nothing was different than what was determined. He continued that if this was a change of position, Mr. McDonald and his Commission would report back to the Board for a change of use.

Ms. Klein stated her concern was procedure and that it involved the community and their need to know. Mr. Warren stated that he was not criticizing the statement, however he questioned the procedural issues relating to what was the participation of the Commission in this process and what decisions and discussions had taken place.

Mr. McDonald stated that the Advisory Commission held their meetings the first Wednesday of every month and at their September 12th meeting he did not know the conclusion of the EIS. He continued that at their October 1 meeting he went over the draft letter that was to be given to Mr. Harrel to be sent as the official position of the Town. He stated that the Commission did not vote on it, but there was a consensus for its approval and no one objected to it.

Ms. Klein asked that notification of the November 17th public hearing be placed in the local newspapers so that local residents could participate. Ms. Thorne asked to be updated more often of what was going on at Commission meetings. Mr. McDonald stated that before September 12th there was not much to update. Ms. Klein stated that with four years of meetings, it would have been nice to have updates.

REPORTS

FIRST SELECTMAN'S UPDATE

First Selectman Harrel reported that sadly J. B. Brown, a volunteer with the Darien Fire Department, passed away Saturday morning.

First Selectman Harrel reported that there was an emergency tabletop exercise by the State of a hazardous accident situation, including a tanker truck. He reported that 105 to 110 people attended from Darien and neighboring towns. Ms. Thorne commented that it was a fascinating exercise and many issues were raised.

First Selectman Harrel reported that the Town Clerk has rescheduled the swearing in of the Board on November 10th at noon. He proposed that the Board meet after to swear in an Acting First Selectman.

First Selectman Harrel reported that a Veterans Day ceremony will be held on November 11th at the VFW at 11:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

October 27, 2003 — Special Meeting

- ** MR. WARREN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF OCTOBER 27, 2003.**
- ** DR. MICELI SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

November 17, 2003 – Regular meeting at 8:00 p.m.

First Selectman Harrel stated that because the Board of Education was having a Tokeneke School tour that evening at 6:45 p.m., he would like to begin the Board of Selectmen meeting earlier at 5:30 p.m. The Board concurred.

November 24, 2003 – First Selectman Harrel stated that there may be a possibly a Regular or Special Meeting on this date if business develops.

December 1, 2003 – Regular meeting at 5:30 p.m.

December 8, 2003 - State of the Town Message.

Mr. Crary reported that he was looking into acquiring streetlights that are currently being leased through CL&P. He stated that they are currently paying CL&P annually for lighting, maintenance and energy costs. He continued that the CCM is working on enabling municipalities the right to purchase streetlights as a capital investment instead of paying a lease payment. Mr. Crary stated that this would be a substantial savings to the Town and would have a return of investment in a year. He stated that they would still pay for a maintenance contract.

First Selectman Harrel then acknowledged that this was Mr. Warren's last meeting serving on the Board and that it was an honor to be with him for six years. Ms. Thorne thanked Mr. Warren for his many years of service and wisdom. Mr. Harrel then read a resolution recognizing Mr. Warren's service on the Board of Selectmen. (Attached). Mr. Warren stated that it was a pleasure to work with the Board and that it will be frustrating to sit on the sidelines.

OTHER BUSINESS

(A two-thirds majority vote is required to add an item to the agenda).

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. WARREN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. THORNE SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

First Selectman Harrel adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna DeVito
Telesco Secretarial Services

**Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting**